(b) and (c) Some report have been received regarding accumulation of stocks in the forest depots. Sandalwood in the form of logs, chips, flakes etc. which form the raw material for the manufacture of handicrafts, mechine finished products and sandalwood oil, are auctioned from time to time by the forest depots for the manufacture of such value add products whose exports are freely permitted.

Review of export councils under Commerce Ministry

6767. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plant to make a review of all the Export Councils tinder the Ministry;

(b) whether there is a possibility of encouraging exporters organisations to consider expanding their role; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The review of the Export Promotion Councils under the Ministry of Commerce is being held at the time of approving the annual plan and Budget, and the mid-year review according to the provisions of para 149 of the Export Import Policy. In addition, reviews are also held as warranted.

(b) and (c) The role and functions of the Export Promotion Councils are specified in Paras 145 and 146 of the Ex-port-Tmport Policy and the Councils are constantly encouraged to expand their role consistant with their charter.

Import of Newsprint

6768. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL *alias* MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the value and weight of Newsprint imported from foreign countries during the year 1994-95?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): As per Foreign Trade Statistics published by Directorate) General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics for the period April, 1994 — February, 1995 the value and weight of newsprint imported from foreign countries are as under :—

Weight (Tons)	Value (Rs. lakhs)
259193	42713.93

Public Sector Companies/Undertakings Engaged in Export, Joint Ventures with Foreign Companies

6769. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of public sector companies/undertakings presently engaged in export trade, joint ventures with foreign companies for establishment of export oriented units in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that some of these companies had a lot of disturbance because of Government's in decision or inept handling of certain payments due to them;

(c) whether repeated efforts by such export companies in public sector to sort out the problem have not resulted in resolving the problems so far;

(d) whether Government have also receied a spate of requests on such accounts from Members of Parliament in the last one year;

(e) if so. the facts and details thereof; and

(f) what further action is proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a), to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Constitution of Indo-American Commercial Alliance Board

6770. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indo-American Commercial Alliance Board has been tonstituwd as reported in the Hindustan Times of 5th May, 1995;

(b) if so, the areas on which two sides have initially agreed to focus at the forthcoming meeting fixed for June 19, 1995 in California;

(c) whether Commercial Alliance is also sponsoring conference in Information Technology opportunities in India; and

(d) if so, how far this Alliance will be useful to India and whether it will en-compass trade Association as well as large and small business particularly in food processing, cotton (knitted) yarn, iron ore etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). The Commercial Alliance will encompass trade associations as well as large and small business, focussing initially on the areas of power, information technology, transportation iufmtnicture and food proces*ing|packaging. On June 19, 1995, the Alliance is sponsoring a conference on information technology opportunities in India in Santa Clara, California, USA. The Alliance provides a framework for increased interaction between private sector enter-priies of both the countries for expanding business relations.

Export Performance of Extreme Fccul Product!

6771. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR RAO: DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question No. 5088 given in the Rajya Sabha on 8th May, 1995 and state:

(a) what has been the export performance of these products for the last four years; and

(b) what is being done to step up the exports to of these products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Export performance of Extreme Focus Products for the last four years is as under :—

Year	Export (US$ Million)	Percentage growth
1991-92 . .	639.0	..
1992-93 . .	685.9	7.0
1993-94 . .	788.7	15.0
1994-95 (P) (April-Dec.) .	679.9	23.0

P= Provisional.

(b) Several measures comprising fine-[1] tuning of trade policy and procedural simplification, infrastructural improvements and institutional arrangements were taken by the Government to step up export of Extreme Focus Products. Important among there are introduction of unified market determined exchange rate system in 1993-94, reduction in import duty on specified capital goods from 40 per cent to 25 per cent, reduction in import duty on raw materials in the area of fiscal concessions, measures by RBI to increase availability of export credit at lower rates of interest, opening of Inland Container depots and Container Freight Stations and Institutional arrangements such *as* the setting